

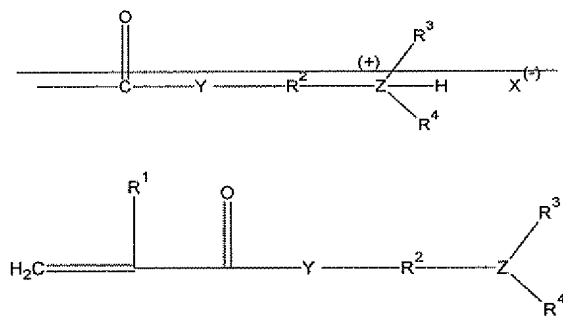
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently Amended) An antifouling coating composition comprising:
a rosin as binder material, and
a salt group-comprising polymer obtainable by a process comprising one or more salts of the steps of:
reacting an acid having an aliphatic, aromatic, or alkaryl hydrocarbon group comprising 5 or more carbon atoms with an amine- or phosphine-functional groups and/or one or more salts of phosphine-functional groups bound to the backbone of the polymer consisting of or comprising a group monomer of formula:



wherein

Y is O or NH,

Z is N or P,

R¹ is a hydrogen atom or a C₁-C₄ alkyl group.

R² is a C₂-C₁₂ divalent hydrocarbon group, ~~preferably a C₂-C₈ divalent hydrocarbon group, more preferably a C₂-C₄ divalent hydrocarbon group.~~

R³ and R⁴ independently represent a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group, preferably a C₁-C₆ alkyl group, ~~more preferably a methyl,~~ or an optionally substituted phenyl group,

to form a monomer comprising a salt of an amine-functional group and/or a salt of a phosphine-functional group, said salt comprising as counter-ion X-is the anionic residue of an acid having aliphatic, aromatic, or alkaryl hydrocarbon group comprising at least 5 carbon atoms; and

polymerizing at least one type of said salt-comprising monomer

~~optionally, the polymer further comprises one or more quaternary ammonium and/or quaternary phosphonium functional groups that are neutralised by counter ions, said counter ions consisting of the anionic residue of an acid having an aliphatic, aromatic, or alkaryl hydrocarbon group comprising 6 or more carbon atoms.~~

14. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 13, wherein the anionic residue comprises 5 to 50 carbon atoms.

15. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 13, wherein the polymer, or a mixture of the polymer with other polymers present in the composition that comprise one or more salts of amine-functional groups and/or one or more salts of phosphine-functional groups and/or one or more quaternary ammonium and/or one or more quaternary phosphonium-functional groups bound to the backbone of the polymer, comprises a total amount of salt-comprising plus quaternary functional monomer building blocks of 5 to 40 mole%, calculated on the total amount of monomers of which the polymer or the polymer mixture has been built.

16. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 13, wherein the coating composition has a binder comprising a blend of a rosin material and an auxiliary film-forming resin in a weight ratio of 20:80 to 95:5, the auxiliary film-forming resin comprising 20-100% by weight of a film-forming polymer (A), which is the salt group-comprising polymer ~~having salts of amine functional groups and/or salts of phosphine functional groups bound to the backbone of the polymer, said salts comprising as counter-~~ ~~ion the anionic residue of an acid having an aliphatic, aromatic, or alkaryl hydrocarbon group comprising at least 5 carbon atoms,~~ and 80-20% of a non-hydrolysing, water-insoluble film-forming polymer (B).

17. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 16, wherein the binder comprises a blend of the rosin material and the auxiliary film-forming resin in a weight ratio of 55:45 to 80:20.

18. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 16, wherein the auxiliary film-forming resin comprises 30-90% by weight of the film-forming polymer (A) capable of hydrolysing or dissociating to a polymer soluble in sea water and 70-10% by weight of the non-hydrolysing, water-insoluble film-forming polymer (B).

19. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 15, wherein the non-hydrolysing, water-insoluble film-forming polymer (B) is an acrylate ester polymer or a vinyl ether polymer.

20. (Currently Amended) A The coating composition according to claim 13, wherein the binder includes a non-polymeric plasticiser present at up to 50% by weight based on the total binder polymer.

21. (Previously Presented) A method for protection of a man-made structure immersed in water such as boat hulls, buoys, drilling platforms, oil production rigs, and pipes comprising applying a coating composition of claim 13 to said structure.